

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

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DRAFTED BY EA/TIMBS:DLFIELD:LGR
APPROVED BY EA - ERLAND HEGINBOTHAM
AID/ASIA - MR. ADLER
EB/OA - MR. ROBERTS (DRAFT)
AID/ASIA/PP - MR. COHEN
S/NM - MR. GIBSON (DRAFT)
AID/ASIA/TK - MR TAYLOR
-----107134 300328Z /64
R 292226Z AUG 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 206437

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, EAIR, BM

SUBJECT: AID TO BURMA: POLICY GUIDELINES

1. WE HAVE REVIEWED RECENT EMBASSY MESSAGES CONCERNING
US-BURMA RELATIONS AND THE QUESTION OF US ASSISTANCE TO
BURMA. IT ACCORDINGLY APPEARS USEFUL AND TIMELY TO OUTLINE
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PURSUING US INTERESTS TN BHRMA.

2. WE SEE NO BASIC INCOMPATIBILITY OF POLICY BETWEEN
(A) EMB VIEW OF ENCOURAGING BURMA TO DEVELOP ITS POTENTIAL
FOR PARTICIPATION IN AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE ECONOMY OF
THE REGION, AND (B) REQUIREMENT TO FOCUS ANY U.S. ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE ON PROGRAMS WHICH PROMOTE SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND/
OR IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS. OUR IMMEDIATE AIM SHOULD BE
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TO LOOK FOR FEASIBLE WAYS TO ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST THESE
PROCESSES, RECOGNIZING THAT OTHER DONOR NATIONS (SUCH AS
WEST GERMANY AND JAPAN) AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
SHOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE THE LEAD. BILATERAL AID IS ALSO
USEFUL WHERE A SPECIFIC INTEREST OF THE USG OR AMERICAN
CITIZENS IS INVOLVED. OUR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL
ASSISTANCE TO BURMA IS, OF COURSE, BASED ON SUCH CONSIDER-

RATIONS.

3. THE DEPT/AID ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER THE CASE FOR U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO BURMA AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME FOLLOWING AN EMBASSY ANALYSIS. WE WOULD NATURALLY WISH ASSURE THAT THE TIMING OF ANY USG DECISION, OR EVEN EXPRESSION THEREOF, WOULD BE OF GREATEST BENEFIT TO OUR INTERESTS AND OF POSITIVE HELP TO BURMA. POLITICALLY, A U.S. DECISION COULD BE BASED ON A SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITY, AS AN ELEMENT OF OUR GENERAL POLICIES TOWARD SEASIA OR TO AVOID AN OVERLY NEGATIVE POSTURE TOWARD THE GUB. ECONOMICALLY, ANY USG DECISION WOULD REQUIRE SOME DEMONSTRABLE EVIDENCE THAT (A) GUB ECONOMIC POLICIES WOULD REASONABLY ASSURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, AND (B) BE CONSISTENT WITH AID PRIORITIES AND/OR PL-480 REQUIREMENTS. WE WOULD NATURALLY EXPECT AN ACCEPTABLE FORM OF REQUEST FOR AID FROM THE BURMESE, EITHER DIRECTLY TO US OR TO THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP.

4. BURMA'S ECONOMIC NEEDS COULD WARRANT CONSIDERATION FOR U.S. DEVELOPMENT AID VIA PROJECT ASSISTANCE OR PL-480 (EDIBLE OILS AND COTTON). WE HAVE BEEN AND REMAIN PREPARED TO CONSIDER BURMESE REQUESTS FOR USE OF OUR SURPLUS BURMESE CURRENCY.

5. THE EMBASSY'S PROPOSAL FOR ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE AIR
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TRAFFIC CONTROL FACILITIES IN BURMA IS REASONABLE IN POLICY AS WELL AS HUMAN TERMS. LEGALLY, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO US ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AT PRESENT UNDER WHICH TO FUND THIS PROGRAM EITHER ON A GRANT OR SOFT LOAN BASIS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT FAA COULD PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, BUT ONLY ON A REIMBURSABLE BASIS. BASICALLY, OUR ROLE CAN ONLY BE TO HEIGHTEN BURMESE AWARENESS OF AND CONCERN ABOUT THIS PROBLEM, HOPEFULLY PRODDING THE GUB INTO GIVING AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL A HIGHER PRIORITY IN ITS OWN BUDGET (OVERFLIGHTS BY FOREIGN AIRCRAFT IN FACT GENERATE FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR BURMA) AND IN THE UNDP PROGRAM IN BURMA.

6. THE PROSPECTIVE VISIT OF EA/TIMBS DIR. FRITTS WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR AN IN-HOUSE DISCUSSION OF THIS TOPIC. VANCE

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